

Assessment for Deeper Learning: PROJECT OVERVIEW

This project is designed to help states that are members of the Innovation Lab Network determine how to design assessment and accountability systems that will lead to changes in teaching and learning that result in more students developing deeper learning skills. The Council of Chief State School Officers has partnered with the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education (SCOPE), the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE) and the Education Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) to support ILN states.

Staff from SCOPE, SCALE, and EPIC will work with states to review current assessment and accountability practices, plan new approaches to assessment and accountability, and design pilot projects to test out these new approaches. Strategies will be customized to each state's educational goals and policy environment. SCOPE, SCALE, and EPIC will provide the following technical assistance:

- **Educate key state leaders about best practices** in performance assessment that can help schools develop and assess deeper learning, including opportunities to see and evaluate a range of assessment options and to engage with others (schools, districts, states) who are using these options.
- **Conduct environmental scans** of each state's educational policy context, goals, governance structure, assessment system, accountability system, history of reform, and cultural beliefs about performance assessment and deeper learning.
- **Help design context-appropriate accountability models** that build upon, extend, or redesign current state accountability systems, and take into account SBAC and PARCC assessments.
- **Support states in the design of pilots** that demonstrate new assessment methods in practice and help states anticipate implementation issues of new assessment and accountability approaches.

The first priority of project staff is to establish connections with each state, identify a contact person, and determine what sort of analyses and resources would be most useful to each state. The longer-term goal is to provide support toward the integration of new and novel ways of supporting deeper learning (e.g. as elements of digital graduation portfolios that can inform college admissions and placement; as proficiency assessments; and as culminating projects and end-of- course examinations). The ultimate goal of the project is to support successful implementation of the Common Core State Standards in ways that support deeper learning by all students. The goal is for this support to continue beyond the initial year of the ILN, either through additional philanthropic support or with ILN state resources.

Traditional
State
Assessments

New CCSS
Assessments

Common
Performance
Tasks

Learning
Tasks

Student-
Designed
Projects

CONTINUUM OF ASSESSMENT FOR DEEPER LEARNING

Standardized,
multiple-choice
tests of routine
skills

Standardized
tests with
multiple-choice
and open-ended
items, plus 1-2
day performance
tasks of some
applied
knowledge and
skills

Standard
performance
tasks lasting 1-3
weeks that
include
structured inquiry
and demand
more integrated
skills

Performance
tasks that require
students to carry
out inquiries,
analyze findings,
and revise in
response to
feedback

Longer, deeper
investigations
lasting 2-3
months requiring
students to
initiate, design,
conduct,
analyze, revise,
and present their
work in multiple
modalities

Examples: WKSE-
CRT, OAKS

Examples: SBAC
and PARCC

Examples: C-PAS
and SCALE NY

Examples: C-PAS
and SCALE OH

Examples:
Envision Schools,
NY Performance
Standards
Consortium, IB

Maine Vignette

This vignette provides information about Maine's education system, gathered from state websites, national databases, Maine Department of Education (MDOE) strategic planning documents, and an interview with Don Siviski on March 19, 2012. The interview covered Maine's definition and measurement of Career and College Readiness (CCR), its system of assessments, flexibility for innovation, fiscal status, and governance structures.

Key considerations from this environment scan include the following:

- A deeper learning definition of college and career readiness can be found in the Guiding Principles of the Maine Learning Results;
- Pending legislation would require a proficiency-based diploma by 2017, requiring students to demonstrate mastery of both content standards and the Guiding Principles in order to graduate;
- The state has past and current experience with performance-based assessment through a number of channels; and
- Though reforms in this locally-controlled state are most successful when driven by district level leadership, the MDOE has a strategic plan for a proficiency based system with several points of entry for state level leadership in more authentic assessment.

Defining College & Career Readiness

Don Siviski's believes Maine's focus on college and career readiness is found in proficiency-based diploma reform, a system-wide transformation built on standards-based curriculum with transparency and measurement targets, and learning progressions of student mastery of those targets. Senate Bill 1442 is in process and will require proficiency-based diplomas by 2017. Last year, the bill came out of committee and the reviser's office put a fiscal note on it. To move the bill forward, the MDOE will have to demonstrate (and the committee will have determine) how the price tag of the proficiency reforms over time will not create an increase in costs. The idea is that this will allow for other cost savings in the long run, though there will be some up front transition investments.

Maine's definition of college and career readiness was established in 1997 when the state established the Maine Learning Results – statements of what students have to demonstrate what they know and can do in all the content areas. The Guiding Principles of the Learning Results state that each Maine student must leave school as: 1) a clear and effective communicator; 2) a self-directed and lifelong learner; 3) creative and practical problem solver; 4) responsible and involved citizen; and 5) an integrative and informed thinker.

SB 1442 states that students must demonstrate mastery of both content standards and the five guiding principles to earn a diploma. The bill would also create a task force of practitioners who are demonstrating how this works in the classroom. Recommendations from this task force will be made in 2013 and distributed through an online portal so others can see how to do this work.

Measuring College & Career Readiness

Currently, the state's accountability measure at the secondary level is the SAT, testing reading, writing, and math in the 11th grade. They are currently holding off on submitting an ESEA waiver request, with plans to collaborate on a group waiver with New Hampshire, Vermont, and West Virginia that proposes new accountability measures for a proficiency-based system.

To demonstrate mastery of the guiding principles under a proficiency-based diploma, the MDOE is proposing senior capstone projects. As a superintendent, Don Siviski's district did capstone projects for eight years. In that context, his district used the Guiding Principles to structure and assess the capstone project. Students selected their topic, conducted research, wrote a mini-dissertation, and made a senior presentation in the spring. This was a high-stakes assessment; if they did not pass, they did not march.

System of Assessments

Maine's current assessment at the secondary level is the SAT, testing reading, writing, and math in the 11th grade. Maine is a governing state in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortia, and they are waiting to see how SBAC's embedded assessments would work with a proficiency-based system. The state's preference would be to eliminate external summative assessments, but they see the culture shift required at the federal level to accomplish this to be highly unlikely.

At the local level, there is a "great big question mark" around the transition to Common Core and SBAC. A lot of people have heard about the new standards and assessments, a lot of people don't believe that SBAC will be that robust, and a lot of people still don't understand what the Common Core actually means for their classrooms. There is a great deal of information out in the field but it is unidirectional, from the state to the local level.

Current and past experience with performance-based assessment in Maine is quite extensive. Much of the work on locally-driven performance-based assessment was taken offline by NCLB, but there are many teachers in the field with the capacity to do the work. The Center for Secondary School Redesign, in partnership with Plymouth Public Schools, New Hampshire Department of Education, and UCLA Center X were

successfully awarded an i3 grant to create a network of 13 schools from 4 New England states that are developing personalized learning environments with performance assessments as a vehicle of demonstrating mastery of course competencies.

Maine is also the home for the Cohort for Customized Learning – 15 districts, four colleges, and 40,000 students - that is analyzing learning targets in every discipline's content standards (Learning Results) and highlighting those that meet the Guiding Principles. As soon as the proficiency-based diploma legislation is passed by the legislature, they intend to activate a task force to investigate external projects that involve the community –experts and resources – that could demonstrate mastery of the learning results and the Guiding Principles.

One of the central tenets of the proficiency-based reforms proposed in Maine is “student voice and choice” in how they demonstrate proficiency. In other words, there would be less emphasis on teacher-led or system-administered tasks and more emphasis on student-initiated projects.

Don Siviski sees other ILN states like Kentucky, New Hampshire, Wisconsin, and Oregon working on very similar reforms - be it customized learning, proficiency-based teaching and learning, competency-based diplomas – and he is eager to work with them to address the cultural shifts and transformations of practice required to do this work.

Flexibility for Innovation

Maine has not submitted an ESEA waiver request, though the state is collaborating with New Hampshire, Vermont, and West Virginia to submit a group waiver designed around proficiency-based systems.

Fiscal Status

By law, the state is supposed to support local districts at the level of 55% of the costs of an essential programs and services model. This formula is based on variables such as per pupil allocation, overhead services, and regional cost adjustments. With recent revenue shortages and budget cuts, actual state funding is now down to 42% of the essential programs and services costs. State economists are predicting that it will be 2018 before the state reaches funding levels equivalent to 2005 levels.

Interim and formative assessments are included in the assessment line item in the essential programs and services model, calculated on a cost per student. There is no monitoring or audit from the state, however, to ensure those funds are specifically used on assessment. The figure is simply a variable that goes into the formula that produces a general bucket of money for each district.

Governance Structure and Goals

Maine's political culture is "aggressively" local control. The role for the MDOE in such a context is to push through high leverage policies and statutes, yet even in situations where there is a law, local districts often resist and ask how the MDOE will enforce it. That is one reason why the Cohort for Customized Learning is so powerful; it is transformation initiated and led by the districts. Don Siviski sees his role at the MDOE as one of guidance, to hit the road, and "teach, teach, teach."

The state is divided into nine regions organized for collaboration and cooperation between districts, but there is still culture of "fiefdom" and territoriality among the 286 districts. There is legislation proposed to formalize these regions in regional service centers so districts can better share costs for certain services, including professional development. The difficult financial situation that every district is finding itself in is – by necessity – bringing down the walls of the fiefdoms.

When the new state superintendent took office, he initiated a strategic planning process inspired and designed to better prepare students for 21st century careers, where "young people need an entirely new set of skills to succeed in an information-age economy." Skills highlighted include problem solving, collaboration, and advanced critical thinking. The vehicle the Superintendent proposes for developing these skills is the proficiency-based diploma.

The strategic plan addresses five areas: learner-centered instruction, effective teachers and leaders, multiple pathways, network of school and community supports, and aligned system. Some specific action items in the plan relevant to this environmental scan include:

- Developing a Common Core implementation plan with an online "Communities of practice" collaboration platform for developing and vetting standards-aligned curricula, posting curriculum guides, lesson plans, and assessment tools;
- Appointing a learner-centered instruction team to support districts and develop a state-level center for best practices to serve as a clearinghouse for learner-centered instruction;
- Developing a plan for SBAC implementation, both summative and formative, and use online Communities of Practice to develop a resource bank of teacher-developed assessment tools, rubrics, and examples of student work; and
- Developing a comprehensive longitudinal data system to track student growth over time and provide ongoing support and training for teachers to effectively use student data in the classroom.

In coordination with the postsecondary system, there is a statutory committee of 10 representatives from the legislature, MDOE, universities, and community colleges that meets quarterly, but little conversation about authentic alignment had taken place until

the MDOE initiated this strategic plan. Now new conversations are happening around the Common Core, SBAC, reductions in remediation, and the possibility that placement tests such as ACCUPLACER will be obsolete in a system with college ready benchmarks.

Oregon Vignette

This vignette provides information about Oregon's education system, gathered from state websites, national databases, Oregon's draft ESEA waiver request, and an interview with Deputy Superintendent Ed Dennis on March April 2, 2012. The interview covered Oregon's definition and measurement of Career and College Readiness (CCR), its system of assessments, flexibility for innovation, fiscal status, and governance structures.

Key considerations from this environment scan include the following:

- A suite of education reforms passed into law in 2011 are changing the state's governance and funding structures for its public school system;
- The reform agenda is structured around improved college and career readiness and success, yet the state does not have a common definition of readiness;
- The new Oregon Diploma includes requirements of essential skill demonstrations that could lead to deeper learning, yet it is unclear how the essential skills will be defined, taught, or assessed;
- The state's ESEA waiver request communicates its intent to implement new measures of readiness that include performance-based assessments, yet such an initiative is juxtaposed to the unsuccessful legacy of the CIM and CAM (explained in further detail below); and
- Oregon has a history - in both policy and practice - of proficiency-based teaching and learning, and the ODE is interested in connecting with other states pursuing this work.

Defining College & Career Readiness

Oregon has not codified, through legislation or administrative rule, a definition of college and career readiness. Ed Dennis characterized the state's working definition of readiness as "in flux," with its current reform agenda centered on better preparing students to succeed in college and career yet a changing understanding of what that means and what it will take.

The state recently adopted new graduation requirements, including a set of essential skills that students must demonstrate to enter postsecondary education and the workforce. Beginning in 2010-11, each grade 9 student cohort must demonstrate mastery of literacy, writing, and applied mathematics in order to graduate. Over time, the state plans to phase in proficiency requirements, learning progressions, and assessment strategies for six more essential skills sets: 1) Demonstrate personal management and teamwork skills; 2) Think critically and analytically; 3) Listen actively and speak clearly and coherently; 4) Use technology to learn, live, and work; 5) Demonstrate civic and community engagement; and 6) Demonstrate global literacy.

The Oregon Diploma - including basic credit requirements, essential skill demonstrations, a personal education plan, and career-related learning experiences - were presented in the state's ESEA waiver application as "a definition of college and career readiness that moves beyond one cut score on one standardized test to a student-centered profile of knowledge, skills, experiences, and aspirations." Yet Ed Dennis cautioned that the Oregon Diploma's essential skills, while well-intentioned goals, have no clear timeline or strategy for statewide implementation. And so goes the state's one working definition of readiness.

The need to better prepare students for college and career, however, is front and center in the state's reform agenda. In 2011, the state passes a suite of education legislation, including Senate Bill 253, which establishes in law the "40/40/20 Goal" that, by 2025, every Oregon student should earn a high school diploma, eighty percent must continue their education beyond high school with half of those earning associate's degrees or professional/technical certificates, and half achieving a bachelor's degree or higher. In August 2011, the Oregon Business Council sponsored a visioning project known as LearnWorks to support the Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the ODE in efforts to implement the education reform legislation. LearnWorks' recommendations for structuring an integrated, outcomes-focused education system were organized by David Conley's 4 Keys of College and Career Readiness.

Measuring College & Career Readiness

Currently, the Oregon Report Card issues a school rating system that identifies schools as Outstanding, Satisfactory, or In Need of Improvement. The rating takes into account: a) student performance in reading and math, as measured by the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) in grades 3-8 and 11; b) improvement in student performance; c) participation rates on statewide assessments; and d) student attendance or graduation rates. The report card does not include measures of college and career readiness. Beginning in 2012-13, following a period of further study, engagement, and piloting, Oregon plans to implement significant changes to the Oregon Report Card, including incorporating measures of college and career readiness necessary to move the state toward its ultimate 40/40/20 Goal.

According to the state's ESEA waiver request, "Oregon is committed to adopting and further developing: a) measures to reflect the state's progress toward a more learner-centered, self-paced system; b) measures to assess the thinking and behavior skills, along with more rigorous content knowledge, necessary to succeed in college and career; c) measures to incent schools & districts in supporting students to graduation and beyond; and d) measures aimed at ensuring alignment across the continuum." Examples of college and career readiness indicators might include the College Board or

ACT suite of assessments, performance assessments like EPIC's C-PAS, college and military enrollment rates, and surveys of employers.

System of Assessments

The major measurement components of the state's assessment system is the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) tests for reading, writing, and math. Students in grade 11 participate. Recent changes to OAKS include moving the test from 10th to 11th grade, readjusted cut scores, a shrinking footprint of the online assessment (3 hours this year for math and reading, 1.5 hours next year), more locally developed options, and significant cuts to the writing assessment (reduced number of grades participating and raters scoring work). Ed Dennis reported that the cuts to the writing assessment were due to heavy lobbying from an outside assessment company.

Oregon is a governing state in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortia (SBAC), and the state plans to implement SBAC assessments in the 2014-15 academic year. Based on the ODE's recent experience with an outside assessment company lobbying against a state-developed assessment system, Ed Dennis worries whether SBAC will be able to withstand a frontal attack – at either the national or state level – from large assessment companies like ACT. As stated in the previous section, the state is entertaining the option of implementing an additional suite of college readiness assessments alongside SBAC.

The state does have experience with performance-based assessment, though not necessarily a successful one. *The Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century*, passed by the state legislature in 1991, created the Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) and the Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM). For both the CIM and the CAM, students generated portfolios to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through complex assignments, hands-on projects, and tests. The portfolios were assessed through a common rubric and scored by multiple raters. In 2007, the legislature voted to eliminate CIM and CAM (and passed legislation leading to the Oregon Diploma). The reasons offered for the failure of CIM and CAM are varied: partial and inconsistent implementation; onerous time requirements for teachers which led to resistance from the teacher unions; unstable technology to store student portfolios; and the district portfolio coordinator role became bureaucratized, divorced from instructional core, and thus easy to eliminate in budget cuts. The opposition was very vocal and well publicized; some districts had "portfolio burning" parties when the legislature eliminated CIM/CAM.

Any shift toward a statewide system of performance assessment will have to combat the legacy of CIM/CAM, yet Ed Dennis thinks there is opportunity in the current context. He suggests posing this question to teachers: Do you want NCLB or authentic assessment of student performance?

Oregon has several existing pilots (at both the school and district levels) working on student-centered, proficiency-based teaching and learning. While the design and definition of proficiency in these projects varies, all are marked by a commitment to allowing students to learn at their own best pace and to advance following the demonstration of mastery of standards rather than the passage of a certain amount of time. Essential to this work is the continual use of formative and interim classroom assessments. Ed Dennis expressed interest in collaborating with other states engaged in similar work to discuss teaching rubrics, assessment models, and processes for calibrating those assessments to create valid and reliable measures of proficiency.

Flexibility for Innovation

The Oregon ESEA waiver request lays forth the following principles to guide its next generation of accountability: 1) Individual student growth: every child, every year moving to and beyond standard; 2) Multiple measures of college and career readiness – Common Core State Standards plus focus on cognitive skills, academic behaviors, and transition skills; 3) Continuous improvement through ambitious but achievable differentiated targets; 4) Achievement Compacts, established between the state and each of its 197 school districts, that express the connection between funding and student outcomes; and 5) Clear, understandable, public information about school performance.

The mechanism for flexibility and continuous innovation is the Task Force on Accountable Schools. In 2011, House Bill 2289 established a legislative task force to examine issues of clear public reporting, college and career ready measures, and implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

Fiscal Status

As with many states, Oregon's state revenues have been greatly reduced through the recession. With ARRA funds ending this year, the fiscal situation for its public education system seems to be getting worse not better. Ed Dennis recalls a time when Oregon legislators talked about "stable and adequate" funding for schools. Now, he says, legislators just say "stabilize funding, eliminate waste." It's a tough fiscal climate, and everything is run on a shoestring budget (including Common Core implementation). It is unclear whether the state or districts would pay for interim SBAC assessments.

Governance Structure and Goals

Oregon's governance model, until 2011, was an elected state Superintendent of Public Instruction reporting to a State Board of Education appointed by the Governor. Senate Bill 909 created the 13-member Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB), chaired and appointed by the Governor, to oversee an "outcomes-focused, seamless system of education, pre-kindergarten through higher education." SB 909 also eliminated the elected office of state Superintendent and created the Chief Education Officer position, appointed by the OEIB, to oversee the K-12 system.

Oregon is a local control state. To leverage local control for state goals, Oregon's overarching strategy of reform is premised on the theory of "tight-loose" – achievement compacts that allow districts to identify their values and set corresponding accountability targets that contribute to the 40/40/20 goal. The state's new 3-part funding formula will be based on these achievement compacts: sustainability funds (based on per pupil inputs); incentive funds (based on districts' delivery on achievement compacts); and strategic investments (moneys dedicated to innovative practices and programs which support the 40/40/20 goal).

Wisconsin Vignette

This vignette provides information about Wisconsin's education system, gathered from state websites, national databases, Wisconsin's draft ESEA waiver request, and an interview with Scott Jones and Laura Pinsonneault on March 27, 2012. The interview covered Wisconsin's definition and measurement of Career and College Readiness (CCR), its system of assessments, flexibility for innovation, fiscal status, and governance structures.

Key considerations from this environment scan include the following:

- The state recently generated a “deeper learning” definition of college and career readiness out of their accountability design team, yet they are not in the position to necessarily measure all dimensions and components of CCR;
- While operating in a local control state, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is beginning to shift its role from compliance monitor to service provider in support of implementation of new standards and assessments;
- The state's fiscal environment is very difficult due to a “balanced budget” Governor and a Legislature unwilling to pay for innovations and new assessments;
- The State Superintendent was elected on a CCR platform and continues to use CCR as a guiding principle for the DPI's work; and
- Much of their ILN efforts at the school level focus on personalized learning, guided by assessment and supported by technology.

Defining College & Career Readiness

While not codified through legislation or administrative rule, Wisconsin's School and District Accountability Design Team (a joint effort of the Governor's Office and DPI with stakeholders from across the state) developed the following definition of college and career readiness that is the ultimate benchmark by which they measure progress: “Students who are college and/or career ready have, upon graduation, the knowledge, habits, and skills needed to succeed in postsecondary education and/or training that maximize their options and opportunities to successfully participate in productive and sustainable employment.”

The design team further identified subcomponents of knowledge, habits, and skills:

- *Knowledge*: mastery of core subjects, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Literacy across all content areas
- *Skills*: creativity and innovation, critical thinking/problem solving, written and oral communication, collaboration and teamwork, life and career skills, information media and technology skills

- *Habits & Behaviors*: flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, leadership and responsibility, health and wellness.

This working definition informed the guiding principles by which Wisconsin's new accountability system was designed, identifying four priority areas (or categories of indicators).

Measuring College & Career Readiness

Wisconsin's current accountability system and report card is a direct translation of NCLB's accountability metrics, so there are no CCR measures in the current system. The state does provide information about AP enrollment and ACT scores on the state report card, but that information is not included in accountability metrics. Wisconsin's new accountability system proposes four categories of indicators at the secondary level: student achievement, student growth, closing gaps, and postsecondary readiness. The postsecondary readiness indicators include an index score of attendance rates, graduation rates, ACT participation, and ACT performance. The ACT suite is currently only implemented in 60% of Wisconsin public schools, yet DPI intends to request funding for full implementation of the ACT suite (EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT, and WorkKeys) for the 2013-2014 academic year.

The School and District Accountability Design Team supports the idea of evolving accountability systems that incorporate additional meaningful measures when the data are available in a reliable, high-quality manner. DPI is exploring options to include other postsecondary data such as participation in advanced courses, rate of college credit earned in HS (AP, IB, Dual Credit), rate of industry certifications, military readiness assessment, and workforce readiness assessments. Due to the diversity of postsecondary choices, a variety of measures and metrics are necessary to evaluate student access across these arenas and to evaluate district and school success in preparing students for any and all choices they may make for themselves after exiting K-12 education. An evolving accountability system with the flexibility to explore new and better measures of college and career readiness will be built upon the state's new student information system. This will enhance what information the state is able to collect from schools and districts and the timeliness of that reporting. Because that system is in development, the next generation accountability system is on a 1-year, 3-year, and longer-term plan.

The state is looking to revise its graduation requirements, though those revisions would most likely come in the form of increased credit requirements. They are interested in exploring competency-based pathways toward graduation, but not in terms of a culminating high school graduation assessment. They had a graduation exam in the past and it didn't last.

System of Assessments

The major measurement components of the state's current assessment system are the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations— Criterion-Referenced Tests (WKCE-CRT) in reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies. The state is a governing state in Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortia (SBAC), and will be transitioning their state assessments to SBAC exams in spring 2015.

There is a good understanding at the local level that the Common Core is not just another reform fad, not that "this too shall pass." The DPI has put a lot of effort into messaging the CCSS as the New World, and with that change comes new ways of assessing student learning. The state's decision to be part of SBAC was its theory of action in the classroom to guide instruction. The decision around statewide adoption of SBAC interim assessments has not been made; if they are great tools, the DPI will support districts in taking advantage of them.

The state does have experience with performance-based assessment, and that was another reason for choosing SBAC. They developed tasks in reading, math, and science, but that was a long time ago. In this time of transition to the "new world," they are looking forward to reintroducing performance tasks as part of the SBAC summative assessments. Laura Pinsonneault doesn't see SBAC as being able to measure everything and all things CCR, and the state isn't in the position right now to want to measure everything. Recent investments in technology - including a statewide SIS, Moodle, and business solutions - does provide the opportunity to collect more information and report it in real time. For example, survey instruments could be rapidly deployed and collected at the student level. They want to make sure that the measures they do use matter, respect different pathways after high school, and have an impact on classroom practice.

Current pilot projects for deeper, more extended learning tasks are taking place in the state's Innovation Lab Network (ILN). One district in the western suburbs in Milwaukee has a senior culminating project where students begin working on it freshman year and the project permeates the high school career. On the other end of the spectrum, an ILN middle school is using the School of One model for regular, real-time assessment that directs personalized learning.

Wisconsin sees the ILN as a large-scale research project on how to not just incrementally improve schools but radically transform them. Participating schools self-selected and have not received any additional funding from the state to participate in the ILN. Looking at the six guiding principles of next generation learning, Wisconsin has chosen

personalized learning as its primary point of entry, and personalized learning requires assessment data showing what students know and are able to do.

The DPI is working with Great Lakes West to evaluate the ILN work, to capture the story of these schools, identify patterns, and share lessons with others. To roll out anything to a larger scale would take a large investment by the state, which is unlikely.

Flexibility for Innovation

As described above, the state's ESEA waiver request does provide mechanisms to evolve the accountability system, with tentative 1-year, 3-year, and long-term plans. The mechanism for evolving the system is the School and District Accountability Design Team, co-chaired by the Governor and the State Superintendent. The proposed system does include an emphasis on multiple measures, especially in the area of post-secondary readiness indicators that respect multiple pathways that students may take after high school.

Fiscal Status

The state's new Governor ran on a balanced budget platform, and he did so through extreme budget cuts to both the DPI and local school districts. The state is experiencing a number of lay-offs, and with ARRA stabilization funding lapsing, they anticipate more dramatic cuts in the coming years.

Wisconsin has a biennial budget, and the DPI will be submitting its budget request this fall to be implemented over the coming year. In the last biennium, many of the DPI's budget requests were not passed on to the legislature by Governor, but Scott and Laura are hopeful that the Accountability Task Force, which the Governor co-chaired, will provide the needed traction for increased allocations, specifically in the area of assessment. The state legislature, however, has not yet signaled a willingness to invest in the state assessment system. Currently, 70% of state assessment costs are paid for by federal funds.

Governance Structure and Goals

As a local control state, Wisconsin has not done much work in terms of implementing statewide innovations. They've seen their role as identifying innovations, connecting districts, and promoting the work. The local control dynamic, however, is shifting; districts are looking to the DPI for more guidance. For example, Wisconsin is transitioning to a statewide student information system. The DPI is feeling out this new role as service provider rather than compliance monitor. The state only has two true

urban areas; the rest of the state is rural. Those areas don't have the resources to create more advanced curriculum and assessments.

Alignment with higher education in the state is informal, through a P-16 council chaired by the State Superintendent alongside the heads of the UW system, the technical college system, and the private college association. As part of a longitudinal data system grant, the DPI is partnering with those three groups to facilitate data exchanges across systems.

The driver for the state's work around college and career readiness comes from State Superintendent. Wisconsin is unique in that there is no State Board of Education. The superintendent is elected, and his campaign – as well as the emerging strategic plan process he is leading in the department - begins with "every child, college and career ready."